Extension Service
U. S. Dept. Agr.

Emerson, Dorothy.

DOWN ON THE FARM *

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

CHARACTERS: JIM NELSON - A farmer.
TUCK COVEY - A neighbor farmer.
MRS. NELSON - Farmer's wife.
MRS. COVEY - Neighbor farmer's wife.
HOME DEMONSTRATION AGENT.
COUNTY AGENT.
LOIS - 18 years old.
BILL - 17 years old.

SCENE I. The country store.

(The two farmers are talking around the cracker barrel.)

TUCK: What do you think of that idea - there on the poster, Jim?

JIM: I can't read it - lost my glasses this morning. What does it say?

TUCK: (Reads from poster)
Emergency Farm Labor Program.
Cooperative Extension Service.
Farmers in This County To Have Victory Farm Volunteers,
Women's Land Army, etc.

JIM: Well, I don't know, Tuck - my woman says she's not goin' to have any good-looking young woman from the city out working in the fields with me. (Laugh) She'd like to have a young girl to help in the kitchen and to tend the baby. I'd like that better myself. Lela is better than any hired man I could get and she'd rather do farm work than housework any day.

TUCK: I've been kind o' thinking I'd like a good young boy out in the fields with me. I always wanted a son, you know. We had Charles with us for years from the Children's Aid Society. He's a lieutenant in the Army, now.

JIM: Some of those city boys have a longing for the farm, they say. Their fathers and mothers were raised on the farm until they got a job in the city - it's kind of in their blood.

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* This playette was written by Dorothy Emerson, State 4-H Girls' Club Agent, University of Maryland, shortly after the Baltimore Labor Conference, for 4-H Club members to give at farm meetings to emphasize the four steps in "Job Instruction Training":
Step I - Prepare the worker. Step III - Try out performance.
Step II - Present the job. Step IV - Follow up.

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TUCK: Poster here says, "See your county agent or home demonstration agent." Wouldn't do any harm, Jim.

JIM: All right Tuck, I've got to wait around in town a while anyway.

SCENE II. Extension office.

(Tuck is seated talking with the county agent. Jim is seated talking with the home demonstration agent.)

CA: I see what you mean, Mr. Covey, and I think we have some fine boys signed up here for just such an opportunity as you and Mrs. Covey have to offer. (Goes through card file.) Now here is Jack - he lives in Baltimore, 16 years old, played on the basket ball team. Father and mother work at Glenn Martin's. He wants a job in the country this summer, likes to be out of doors. Here is another - Bill Cooper, lives in Washington, D. C., father has been employed in the Government for the past 5 years. Bill lived with his family on a farm until he was 12; he is 17 now. Loves farm life, says he wants to help win the war by feeding - - -

TUCK: That's the boy for me, Mr. ---. I like his attitude, and he knows what farm life is. Well, thanks - I'm glad to have had this chance to talk things over with you and get lined up a bit. You will write to Bill then, and let me hear from you about the first of next week?

CA: That's right, Mr. Covey, there ought to be a letter back here by Wednesday morning.

TUCK: Wonder how Jim is coming along over there with Miss ---(HDA).

HDA: I think you will find Lois is just the right person to be a member of your family this summer, Mr. Nelson. You see by her letter that she has always wanted a little sister. It's true she has lived in a home where they kept a maid, but her heart is in the country. She has been in summer camps and her camp directors say that she is the kind of girl everyone loves because she is so willing and helpful.

JIM: Well, I'll go home and talk it over with Lela, but I rather think you'll be hearing from us in a few days.

Curtain

(Or, if necessary to close scene without curtain, have general low talk as men say good-by to the agents and all move off the stage.)

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SCENE III. Mrs. Covey's home.

(Mrs. Covey and Mrs. Nelson are talking.)

MRS. N: Well, the suspense will soon be over - it's 'most time for the bus to arrive in town.

MRS. C: I've fixed up our spare room for Bill, and I declare it's a grand job if I do say so.

MRS. N: We didn't have a spare room, but I bought a comfortable bed from mother, and we built a little closet for Lois's clothes. I think she will be comfortable sharing the room with the baby. We still call her a baby, but land, at 4 she's as good company as a grown-up person. It's a big room, and she can fix it up any way she wants to.

I've told Nancy what fun it's going to be to have a big sister, and how Lois will have to take my place with her during the day. Nancy has gone to town now with her father - she can hardly wait.

MRS. C: Well, I'll tell you - Tuck is just like a kid himself over having Bill come. He has made out a list of things he is going to teach Bill, so he can have responsibilities of his own just like a man. He says he is going slowly at first, he doesn't want him to get discouraged, you know. What are you going to have Lois do?

MRS. N: She wants to learn to cook - they never let her mess around at home, she says. I had an awful nice letter from her. Then I'm counting on having her can a lot. We told her that for every 25 cans she puts up for us she may have one can to take home. Then on her half day off, if she wants to can more for her home, that's all right with us. We've got acres of food and plenty of wood for the stove.

MRS. C: Here they come up the lane. Let's go out to the car and meet them.

Exit

SCENE IV. Mrs. Nelson's home.

(Mrs. Nelson shows Lois how to use the pressure cooker for a wood or coal stove.)

MRS. N: So you know all about the need for canning this year!

LOIS: Oh, yes, everyone in the city does now with the point system and ration books. I'd love to learn how to can.

MRS. N: I have a little time this morning before Mr. Nelson needs me to help him. Suppose we look over the pressure cooker together. You know, Lois, this is worth its weight in gold today. I bought

MRS. N: (cont.) this 2 years ago when we started canning meat, and I declare I don't know what we'd do without it now. It's almost impossible to buy one now. I never let anyone else handle my cooker before - but I know how careful you are, so I'm going to teach you to use it and trust you with it.

LOIS: Oh, Mrs. Nelson!

MRS. N: This is one of the types made entirely of aluminum. You see here there are six screws that hold the cover on. I always unscrew two at a time at opposite points from each other like this. Now you take hold of the next two and unscrew - just a little at a time on each two. This is the gauge - it registers the amount of pressure inside. See the figures for the number of pounds - 5, 10, 15, and 20. This little delicate part is the pet cock. When it is up like this, the steam inside comes out here in a steady stream. When you shut it down like this - the steam is shut up inside of the pressure cooker when the cover is screwed on tight, and the pressure goes up on the gauge. When you take the cover off or put it on, always take it by the handle. When I am putting the cooker away for some time, I turn the cover upside down like this, so these delicate parts are inside and cannot be hit or injured. Now, suppose you turn the tables, Lois, and see if you can be the teacher and tell me what I have told you.

(Lois goes through the steps just as Mrs. Nelson did with her.)

MRS. N: That's fine; now let's take up the next step. We must always keep water in the bottom of the cooker when it is on the stove. You know what happens to a cooking pan when the water boils out of it. I always pour in enough water to come up <u>to</u> this wire rack on the bottom - See? Do you want to do that now?

LOIS: (Pours in water carefully - a little at a time, both watching carefully until the right amount is poured in.) Is that about right?

MRS. N: Just a little bit more, Lois. There - that looks exactly right to me just about an inch. This is the rack we put the jars or tin cans in whichever we may be using.

LOIS: Can you can in tin? Tin cans like you buy? (Laughs) I mean, used to buy in the stores?

MRS. N: Oh, yes, we have a tin can sealer and we can all of our tomatoes in tin cans.

LOIS: Can I learn to use it?

MRS. N: You certainly can, my dear. Now suppose you get the cover and screw it on - just as we did a few minutes ago.

(Lois does this - explaining over the points about screwing it.)

MRS. N: How are you going to fix it so that the steam comes out first?

LOIS: (Fitting pet cock bar up straight.) Like this?

MRS. N: That's right, and you leave it until the steam is coming out in a steady stream, then you leave it open for 7 minutes.

LOIS: Do you really time it by the clock?

MRS. N: Oh yes, in canning we do everything very accurately. A few minutes overcooking or undercooking may make a great deal of difference in the keeping qualities of the food or in its taste.

LOIS: Now suppose the 7 minutes were up - I would move this bar across - down - like this.

MRS. N: Good - you are learning fast. Now comes a very important part. When you have jars in the cooker - stay right with it until the needle in the gauge comes up to the right amount of pressure.

LOIS: How will I know how much?

MRS. N: I hoped you would say that! Here is our University of Maryland canning bulletin and here is the timetable for all our canning. Suppose you look up string beans.

LOIS: This is the pressure cooker column and it says for - string beans - (runs her finger down) 40 minutes.

MRS. N: At how much pressure?

LOIS: Oh yes, it says at the top of the column - 10 pounds. So I would keep it at 10 pounds pressure for 40 minutes.

MRS. N: That's right - but here is the important part: You have to watch the gauge so the needle does not go higher or lower. Sometimes I have to move the cooker back on the stove - sometimes forward, where it is hotter.

LOIS: You really have to keep your mind right on it, don't you?

MRS. N: You certainly do.

MRS. N: Now suppose the time is up for cooking the beans - they have been in the cooker at 10 pounds pressure for 40 minutes. I pull the cooker 'way over here to the back of the stove where there is practically no heat - and let the pressure go down S L O W L Y, until the needle on the gauge has gone back to zero. Always remember this, Lois - it's a very important point to remember.

LOIS: (Repeats the words thoughtfully.) Let the pressure go down SLOWLY until the needle has gone back to zero.

MRS. N: Now the needle is at zero and I open the pet cock like this - very carefully. It's hot, so you see I use a towel. Keep opening the pet cock slowly until all the steam has escaped.

LOIS: Why must you be so careful?

MRS. N: First of all for the sake of safety - so I won't get burned. When you do take the cover off, after unscrewing it the proper way, tilt it like this toward you, so the steam will not come up in your face. Now you pretend there is steam in the cooker and you are letting it out.

(Lois takes the towel - gently opens pet cock and closes it two or three times. Unscrews opposite screws - tilts cover away from her - takes it off.)

MRS. N: Good - Now while I'm out with Mr. Nelson in the garden this morning, why don't you practice letting the pressure go up to 10 pounds and see if you can keep it there for 10 minutes.

LOIS: All right, I'd like to do that - it will make me feel as though I am making a start in canning.

MRS. N: You are - a big start. Now let's write on Nancy's blackboard the important things to remember. You tell me and I will write.

LOIS: (Gives the points and Mrs. Nelson writes on the board) Well, first you put water in the cooker. Then put on the cover and leave the pet cock up. Now screw the cover on - two screws opposite each other at a time - a little on each two at a time until real tight. Watch for the steam to come out and count 7 minutes. Then close the pet cock. Now watch for the pressure to go up and stay right with it. Keep the pressure at 10 pounds for 10 minutes. Pull the cooker to the back of the stove. Let the needle come back to zero slowly. Open pet cock - slowly, and close it if a lot of steam comes out. When steam comes out slowly - keep opening pet cock a little at a time, until all the steam is out. Unscrew the cover - opposite screws - a little at a time. Take the cover off carefully - tilting it so the steam won't come up in my face.

MRS. N: (Writes each point as Lois tells it)

1. Water in cooker.
2. Put cover on - pet cock open.
3. Screw cover on - opposite screws gradually.
4. Watch for steam escaping.
5. 7 minutes steady steam.
6. Close pet cock.
7. Stay with cooker.
8. Keep pressure at 10 pounds for 10 minutes.
9. Then cool, letting needle come back to zero slowly.
10. Be sure needle is at zero.
11. Open pet cock slowly - let steam out.
12. Unscrew cover - opposite screws gradually.
13. Tilt cover so steam won't come up in face.

These are very important points to remember in using this pressure cooker, Lois, and I wanted to go over it slowly enough for you to feel perfectly at ease when you use it alone.

LOIS: I'd rather learn this way too, Mrs. Nelson. Thank you for taking so much time and being so patient with me. You've given me another idea, too - that is, I should be as patient with Nancy as you've been with me. That's the way I want to be with Nancy when I teach her little things to do during the day.

Part II. *

(Mr. Covey shows Bill how to wash the milk buckets.)

MR. COVEY: Well, Bill, you are all set to help us out here on the farm and I know we both are going to have a lot of fun. Things don't get monotonous here because there are so many different kinds of jobs to do. We will do a lot of work together, but after you get acquainted you can take full charge of some things. I want you to learn to take care of the dairy equipment. Did you ever help your mother wash the dishes?

BILL: Yes, I did, but I didn't like it.

MR. C: Most boys don't, but washing milk buckets is a lot different except we must keep them just as clean as the dishes used on the table. You like milk, don't you, Bill?

BILL: I sure do, Mr. Covey. The football coach told us to drink a quart a day during the football season.

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* Part II. was written by Milo S. Downey, State 4-H Boys' Club Agent, University of Maryland.

MR. C: Your coach was right, and you just drink all the milk you want while you are here with us this summer. Now to the job of washing the milk utensils. The first thing we do after we are through milking is to rinse the buckets with water like this. Put a few quarts of cold water in the pail and shake it around rinsing all the milk from the sides of the pail. (Pours rinse water into another pail.) Now, Bill, you try rinsing that one. (Shakes vigorously.) Be careful, now, don't splash yourself.

BILL: Gee, Mr. Covey. they look clean enough already.

MR. C: Yes, Bill, but looks are deceiving. We still have to wash them, we do the washing with a brush in this tub of hot water. You notice we have the tub about half full of water, and we add a level cub of washing powder. This powder is used in place of soap because it dissolves the particles of butterfat that may be sticking to the milk pail. You then take this brush and thoroughly scrub the inside and outside of the bucket. Now you try scrubbing the other bucket.

BILL: Do you wash the buckets this way every time you milk, Mr. Covey?

MR. C: Oh, sure, Bill, milk is one of our most important foods and we must do everything possible to keep it clean and pure. The next step is to rinse the buckets in clean, hot water to be sure to eliminate any trace of the washing powder. Give your bucket a rinse in this tub. The last step is to sterilize the buckets by rinsing them in a chlorine solution. We make this solution by putting a spoonful of this sterilizing powder into the water and putting it in this tub. The sterilizing solution kills the bacteria that still may be left in the buckets. When you finish rinsing in the sterilizing solution, put the buckets on this rack to dry until next milking time.

We will throw away all the water we used except the sterilizing solution. I will keep it to use in washing the cows' udders before we milk in the morning.

Bill, we have taken a lot of time washing the utensils, but you will do the job in half the time when you get accustomed to it.

MR. C: Now, Bill, suppose someone should ask you to tell him about your first job on the farm - what would you say?

BILL: The first job was the washing of milk buckets which is done in four steps: First, rinse with cold water; second, scrub with a brush in hot water to which a washing powder has been added; third, rinse in hot water; and fourth, sterilize by rinsing in a chlorine solution.

MR. C: That's fine, Bill, and don't forget you are to drink all the milk you want while you are here with us this summer.